



5TH TURKEY - GULF DEFENCE AND SECURITY FORUM PHOENIX DECLARATION

5th Turkey - Gulf Defence and Security Forum whose main theme “Unity in Diversity, and Building the Security” was held by TASAM National Defence and Security Institute, together with the 7th Istanbul Security Conference on the date of **05 November 2021** in **DoubleTree by Hilton Istanbul Atasehir Hotel & Conference Centre** simultaneously as a sub-event.

A broad speaker and protocol participation is provided to the Forum from various countries and regions, different fields and sectors. Diplomatic representatives and Ministerial delegations from many Gulf countries took part in the Forum. Speeches and presentations were made by domestic and foreign experts, academicians and diplomats in the Forum. Relevant authorities from Turkey and the Gulf were represented in the Forum, and all the sessions were followed institutionally.

As a result of the Forum, the following determinations & recommendations were made and it was decided to bring them to the attention of all relevant authorities and the public:

1. Despite the strong historical and cultural background, the transformation of Turkey - Middle East or, to a lesser extent, Turkey - Gulf States relations, where a strategic dialogue is still developing, from a fragile axis to a cooperation axis that will adapt to new balances, new roles and new alliances, is a necessity rather than an option. Seen with vision and foresight, it has been tested in various crises, where history and the spirit of the time have long reminded this.
2. As the first country outside the Region, with the Strategic Partner Status (2008) to adopt a high-level regular institutional dialogue, in addition to the USA and the EU, Turkey's especially commercial relations with the countries of the Region have gradually developed; The trade volume between the parties increased exponentially in this process. Among other factors, the search for a trust-based strategic dialogue has an important role in these developments, which have had serious positive results for both sides. Apart from the brotherhood of religion, language, history and geography, “strategic interdependence and building trust” is the basic mental threshold in front of Turkey - Gulf States relations. Correct management of priorities and differences between countries so that they do not turn into regional weaknesses and security gaps will be possible by focusing on common risks and opportunities.
3. Developments in the last ten years, including the pandemic, that have had the same effects as in a century; It has been a critical milestone for the change of production, consumption, growth and conventional power standards, including security and defence. Again, scenarios and preparations for the reinterpretation of the national and international immune system and strategic transformation have become a priority issue. In this context, studies and cooperation for the “Security/Defense/Space Ecosystem and Strategic Transformation of the Future” have become the locomotive priority for each country.
4. Technologies related to unmanned systems have come a long way. Many technologies, especially UAVs, are used with air, land and sea systems. Artificial intelligence and fully autonomous robotic technologies will lead to a paradigm shift in all areas from conflict management, enforcement and law in the future. While developing in this field, different environments such as conventional weapons such as hypersonic missiles or cyber threats must not be forgotten.





5. In Turkey's developing defence industry breakthroughs, UAV/UAV-AD, autonomous systems have become stronger within the framework of the "Strategic Partnership". Unmanned systems; information-based technologies (software technologies, computer software, information systems, etc.), material-based technologies (hardware technologies, hardware, equipment, systems, robots, etc.) and electronic warfare systems should also maintain their place through a stronger and larger scale size. It should be one of the sources of inspiration for further cooperation for the Gulf States.
6. Especially after the 2nd Karabakh war, UAV/UAV-AD systems that changed the war tactical doctrines from the beginning; in the tactical field, the effect of the conflict on the method/style of operation (internal security operations and its direct contributions to the battlefield), at the strategic level, its effect on participation in the war and the execution of the war (paradigm change in security - fully autonomous systems, artificial intelligence, armed conflict law) in the new security conflict perspective It will be the most decisive factor and the determining factor in the success of the armies.
7. The Chabahar Port project is a work that provides Iran's access to the ocean and connects India with landlocked countries such as Afghanistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. There are opinions that this project can compete with the Belt and Road project led by China. It is important to share the multidimensional impact analysis of this port within the framework of mutual consultations.
8. The relationship between China and Iran is based on a win-win understanding. Due to the China-Iran 25-Year Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement, Iran will supply China with low-priced oil for 25 years. Within the scope of this agreement, a mechanism that will facilitate banking transactions in Chinese currency will be established between the two countries. Again, this agreement will provide the opportunity to build oil depots on Chinese soil to stockpile and export without the need to pay taxes. China is striving to make Iran the centre of the Silk Road's trade route in the Middle East. In this direction, the agreements and cooperation between the two countries through the China-Iran 25-Year Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement; intelligence, 5G telecommunications, strategic training, research and interaction, military, defence and security should be monitored along with impact analysis.
9. When the position of Iran and India in the developments in Afghanistan is examined, it is observed that all three countries act in line with their interests in the Region. Security and threat elements - created by Shiite minorities - stand out in the region. Tehran and New Delhi are uncomfortable with Pakistan's policy of expanding its sphere of influence in Afghanistan. Iran hosted talks with Afghans shortly before the Taliban took over Kabul. After this hosting, good relations with the Taliban developed. India's presence in the region is mostly economic. India is trying to maintain its presence in the Region with its investments. Indian private and state companies have invested in the mining sector, electricity sector, iron and steel sector in Afghanistan. India suffered great losses in the capture of Afghanistan by the Taliban. The future of investments made by India in the Region after the Taliban is uncertain for now.





10. The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan has caused China to worry about its security phenomenon. Fearing that the Uyghurs would show resistance with the capture of Afghanistan, China tried to eliminate this new threat by establishing close relations with the Taliban. As a result of this goal, China has become the largest foreign investor in Afghanistan and the Taliban have begun to see China as the main partner in their efforts to rebuild Afghanistan.
11. Turkey has made efforts to ensure peace and security under the leadership of UN-ISAF II. He also did many regional studies in Afghanistan (such as education, food aid). Turkish troops won the respect and love of the people. The second Taliban era, which started in 2021, brought with it an oppressive regime. People began to flee the country. The influx of refugees from Iran also threatens Turkey. Irregular migration to our country has taken place by 300 thousand Afghans. On October 14, 2021, the Taliban delegation came to Ankara and Turkey's positive view of the new administration seems to be constructive in terms of bilateral relations in the future.
12. China uses a hybrid policy of sharp power in its Middle East policy. Using the media, universities and economic tools, China is trying to change its appearance in the Middle East countries with the technique of manipulation in information. The perception of China in Israel is quite positive, with 66% of Israeli respondents having a positive approach to China. In Iran, on the other hand, 83% of Iranians have a positive approach to China because the international and regional policies of the two countries overlap and have similar views. Despite this, it is not overlooked that China benefits from international sanctions against Iran. The country with the lowest positive perception of China in the Middle East is Turkey. This ratio is below 37% and one of the main reasons for being so low is the Uyghur issue. Although the Turkish public has negative attitudes towards China, the Turkish and Chinese governments are eager to improve relations between the two countries. Considering all these, the conclusion is that China is trying to consolidate the image of China in the Middle East region by manipulating information.
13. It can be said that the USA has turned to a policy of restricting China's access to energy to limit its economic growth. With the relative indifference of the US to the increasing attacks on power generation facilities and transmission lines in the Gulf region since 2019 and the withdrawal of air defence systems in Saudi Arabia in late August 2021, China, benefiting from the US security umbrella to secure its energy needs. It is important in terms of showing that the period is over. The USA is like this; China, which supplies all its energy needs from critical waterways - where it is very difficult and costly to provide security - creates a political environment where its energy needs are no longer secure.
14. The international and regional policies of China and Iran overlap. China benefits from international sanctions against Iran by economic means, and there is no significant difference in views and moves between these two countries. Iranians; It has been determined that it overlaps with Chinese policies more than its regional allies Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.



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15. It is considered that the indifference of the USA in the face of recent attacks on energy facilities and transmission lines in the Gulf, especially Saudi ARAMCO facilities, is aimed at forcing China to spend more on defence to ensure its energy security. Considering China's dependence on Gulf energy resources for sustainable economic growth and national welfare, it is expected that the Beijing administration will change its policy of generating influence with economic tools towards the Gulf region and will turn to a military power projection for the Region in this process. The increasing military activities of China in the Gulf region and its military cooperation with the countries of the region are presented as evidence to support this claim.
16. It is possible to consider the security threats/problems faced by the member states of the Gulf Arab States Cooperation Council in three different temporal categories. Long term threats/issues, medium-term threats/issues, short term and ongoing threats/issues.
17. Climate change remains the source of long-term threats/problems. With the increasing global temperature and melting glaciers, it is predicted that sea and ocean waters around the world will rise by 1 to 1.5 meters. This is a development that directly threatens Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE, whose residential areas are almost at sea level, and Katif and Hasa, the oil and oasis region in eastern Saudi Arabia.
18. The future of oil and natural gas stands as the source of medium-term threats/problems. Finding new oil and natural gas resources and seeking and putting into use more environmentally friendly energy sources as alternatives to these two sources are the most serious problems/threats in front of these countries, whose economy and state revenues are largely dependent on oil and natural gas sales. The efforts of these countries to reduce their dependence on oil and/or natural gas have not yet achieved an alternative level of success.
19. The geography of the Gulf countries stands as the source of short-term and ongoing threats/problems. Gulf countries have about 40% of the world's oil reserves and about 20% of the world's natural gas reserves. These countries, with their oil and natural gas revenues, keep their populations living in a standard of living and luxury far above the world average. On the other hand, the geography of the Gulf countries is home to people living below the world average in terms of living conditions and corresponding to approximately 20% of the world's population.
20. With their population constituting only 0.5% of the world's population, the capacity of self-defence of the Gulf countries is limited. This security problem is a problem that the Gulf countries face at all times, and it is almost the only factor that determines the foreign policy orientations of these countries. In the face of this security problem, it is a difficult reality for the Gulf countries to take a position in the face of global developments, from Turkey, Iran and other Arab countries to Africa, Pakistan-India, the USA-China competition.



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21. The last two decades have brought about significant transformations in many countries. In particular, the use and reflection of the concept of "governance" by the states have had an impact on this transformation. The direction of this transformation has also rapidly shifted from management to governance or from bureaucracy to the market and market networks. Today, "strong governance" has become the most important lending/lending criteria of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF. Countries with oil companies, especially Gulf countries, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, open up to the world through energy-exporting companies rather than their institutions.
22. The current instability in the Middle East is geopolitically moving to the Eastern Mediterranean via the Levant region. against Turkey; The alliance struggles and political diplomacy between Greece and France have gained a regional "Cold War" concept.
23. Turkey's most effective solution against the alliance led by Greece and France in the Eastern Mediterranean; GUNBOAT Diplomacy with the Naval Forces is to support this in coordination with Air-Land-Intelligence-Defense Industry and Diplomacy.
24. After Turkey's expulsion from the F-35 aircraft project, Israel and the countries of the Region approved the sale of F-35s to the UAE in the "normalization" process in the Gulf, and subsequently, the UAE suspended the purchase, resulting in fierce competition in the field of defence and arms deals. The delivery of F-22 Raptor warplanes, which have the most advanced technology in the world, to Israel is clear proof and an indicator of the US-Israel alliance in the Region.
25. Among the war doctrines of the future, UAV/UAV-AD systems are seen as the determining factor. After the 2nd Karabakh war and the civil war in Libya, the Turkish UAV/UAV-AD systems are effective and pioneering in the world, a diplomatic attack is essential for the realization of more sales to the Gulf countries.
26. It has been stated that ASELSAN's smart city systems will be effective especially in the densely populated cities of the Gulf countries for the detection and treatment of people who are roaming infected/sick in cities after Covid-19.
27. With the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the Gendarmerie, which mostly carried out the duties of ensuring safety and security in rural areas; He has undertaken important duties together with the Police and Army units. Today, while the Gendarmerie is mostly performing law enforcement in rural areas, it can take part in the fight against terrorism both in rural areas and in city centers and abroad operations, with its understanding of law enforcement duty and operational capacity. In addition, the Gendarmerie organization; Thanks to its understanding of working with the public, is seen that it has an important function in the operational struggle against terrorist organizations as well as in preventing terrorist organizations from attracting public support to their side. It has been strongly recommended that the Gendarmerie law enforcement units in the Gulf countries benefit from this experience in every aspect.



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28. It is not possible to eliminate or eliminate disasters, but some policies must be implemented before or after disasters occur to prevent and/or minimize the destructions that occur as a result of disasters and disasters. It has been reiterated that Turkey has a great potential for cooperation in disaster experience to minimize the post-natural disaster impact with effective management and personnel in disaster situations where there is a danger to the state, society, individuals, property and goods.
29. Force majeure such as inflation and food crisis experienced all over the world after Covid-19; It has been stated that increasing production centers and locating them in wide geographies will reduce and minimize the crisis. In this context, it was especially emphasized that the cooperation to be provided immediately is the key for both national and regional food security.

05 November 2021, Istanbul



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